T-P

Tijerina Trial to Begin Today

He, Nine Others Face Many Charges

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — The trial of militant Spanish-American land grant claimant Reies Lopez Tijerina begins Tuesday, seventeen months after the armed raid on a small rural courthouse in northern New Mexico.

Tijerina and nine others will stand trial on charges of kidnaping, assault on a jail and false imprisonment growing out of the raid in June 1967 that startled New Mexicans and set off one of the biggest manhunts in the state's history.

Tijerina and the others were arrested after a group of armed men stormed into the sleepy village of Tierra Amarilla, took over the courthouse, wounded three law enforcement officers and fled with several hostages, including a newsman.

Tijerina and his co-defendants all pleaded innocent of the charges at a preliminary hearing in September after months of legal maneuvering.

COURTHOUSE RAID

The courthouse raid was the culmination of months of unrest in northern New Mexico that included haystack burnings and fence cutting in a dispute over land granted early settlers by the King of Spain.

Tijerina was convicted in .S. District Court last year in connection with a takeover of a Forest Service campground. The conviction is under appeal.

Tijerina is leader of the Alliance of Free City States, a group of Spanish-Americans who claim title to the millions of acres once under the Spanish land grants.

The Alliance, or Alianza, as its members call it, has been less active in recent months, and a politically oriented group called the People's Constitutional Party appears to be replacing it.

—AP WIREPHOTO.
REIES LOPEZ TIJERINA
Stands Trial Tuesday.

TIJERINA TOP CHOICE

Tijerina was the PCTP's candidate for New Mexico governor until the New Mexico Supreme Court ruled him ineligible for the ballot because of his federal conviction.

The party placed the names of candidates on the ballot for state offices, but most PCP candidates polled less than 1,000 votes.

The state's case against Tijerina was weakened last January when courthouse jailer Eulogio Salazar was found near his northern New Mexico home beaten to death. He was to be a star witness in the prosecution's case. No one has been charged in his death.

Tijerina led a number of his group to Washington last summer to participate in the Poor People's campaign. But the Spanish-American group became embroiled in a controversy with Negro leaders, who, Tijerina claimed, declined to give the Spanish-Americans enough voice.

The ancient Egyptians believed 13 was a lucky number. For them there were 12 steps to be climbed during a lifetime. The 13th led to everlasting life.